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LETTER DATED 24 JULY 1993 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF AZERBAIJAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to transmit to you the text of a statement, issued by the Chairman of the CSCE Minsk Conference H.E. Mr. Mario Raffaelli on the ongoing Armenian offensive and seizure of the Azerbaijani city of Agdam.

I should be grateful if you would circulate this statement as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Hassan A. HASSANOV
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex

Statement by the Chairman of the CSCE Minsk Conference on the offensive and reported seizure of the Azeri city of Agdam

The Chairman of the CSCE Minsk Conference on Nagorny Karabakh, together with the representatives of the nine countries which are co-sponsors of the cease-fire Timetable for Nagorny Karabakh, strongly condemn the offensive on, and the reported seizure of, the Azeri city of Agdam. They ask for the immediate cessation of hostilities and for the withdrawal from the occupied territory.

This unacceptable act occurred at the very moment when the nine were meeting to prepare the final version of the cease-fire Timetable. It specifically violated direct and repeated commitments made to the Chairman of the Minsk Conference by the leaders of the Armenian community of Nagorny Karabakh that they would not seize Agdam.

This behaviour, recalling similar actions with respect to the Azeri territory of Kelbajar, calls into question whether it is possible to continue to include this group in the CSCE negotiating process for the Nagorny Karabakh conflict.

The Minsk Group has worked in good faith for more than one year to help find a peaceful solution to the situation of Nagorny Karabakh. Based on this work, the CSCE is prepared to dispatch a substantial Monitoring Mission to help ensure that a cease-fire is respected while negotiations move forward on the political status of Nagorny Karabakh. Each time the group has reached a significant milestone in its work, military actions have been undertaken which have undercut these efforts. It is in the interest of the Armenian community of Nagorny Karabakh to respect Security Council resolution 822 and the decisions of the Minsk Group and to withdraw immediately from territories recently seized by force. This is the key factor in ensuring that peaceful negotiations can move forward.

Those who encourage the Armenian community of Nagorny Karabakh to continue the fighting and the encroachment on the surrounding territories share responsibility for the continuing loss of Armenian lives and the destruction of Armenian economy.

For his part the Chairman of the Minsk Conference requested the CSCE to establish a presence in the region as soon as possible. A report will also be presented to the President of the United Nations Security Council on this serious and alarming setback to the Group's efforts to find a solution to the ongoing conflict.

The nine will meet again next week to consider further steps.